

applied himself to *Æsop*, who told him that *he could do nothing*: my comrades, says he, have agreed to do every thing, and there will be nothing left for me to do. Well but if I give money for you, says *Xanthus*, will you be good and honest? I'll be that, says *Æsop*, whether you buy me or not. Ay, but won't you run away, says the philosopher? Pray, said *Æsop*, did a bird in a cage ever tell his master that he intended to make his escape? The philosopher applauded the quickness of his wit, but told him that his unlucky shape would set people a staring and hooting at him wherever he went. A philosopher, says *Æsop*, should esteem a man for his mind, and not for his body; as this answer gave *Xanthus* an high opinion of his wisdom, he bid the merchant set his lowest price on that miserable creature. Sir, says the master, if you will bid me like a chapman for one of the other two, you shall have this monster into the bargain. In short, the purchase was made, and *Xanthus*, taking *Æsop* home, presented him to his wife, who was not a little offended at his mis-shapen appearance, but when she came to converse with him and heard his witty answers, she was so well

well reconciled to him, that *Æsop* became somewhat of a favourite.

Some time after this, *Xanthus* took *Æsop* with him to a gardener's to buy herbs, when the gardener desired the philosopher to inform him why those plants that sprung up of their own accord, grew so much faster than those he planted? *Xanthus* could give no better answer, than that providence would have it so, which not being satisfactory to the man, and seeing *Æsop* smile, he told the gardener, with a supercilious air, that it was beneath a philosopher to busy his head about such trifles, and that, if he had a mind to be informed, he would do well to ask his *slave*; upon this the gardener applied himself to *Æsop*, who gave him this answer, "The earth acts in the nature of a mother, with regard to the things she brings forth herself, and as a step-mother only, with regard to what she is obliged to raise by the assistance of others. It is no wonder therefore, that she should take most care of her own children." The gardener was so pleased with this reply, that he would take nothing for his herbs, and told